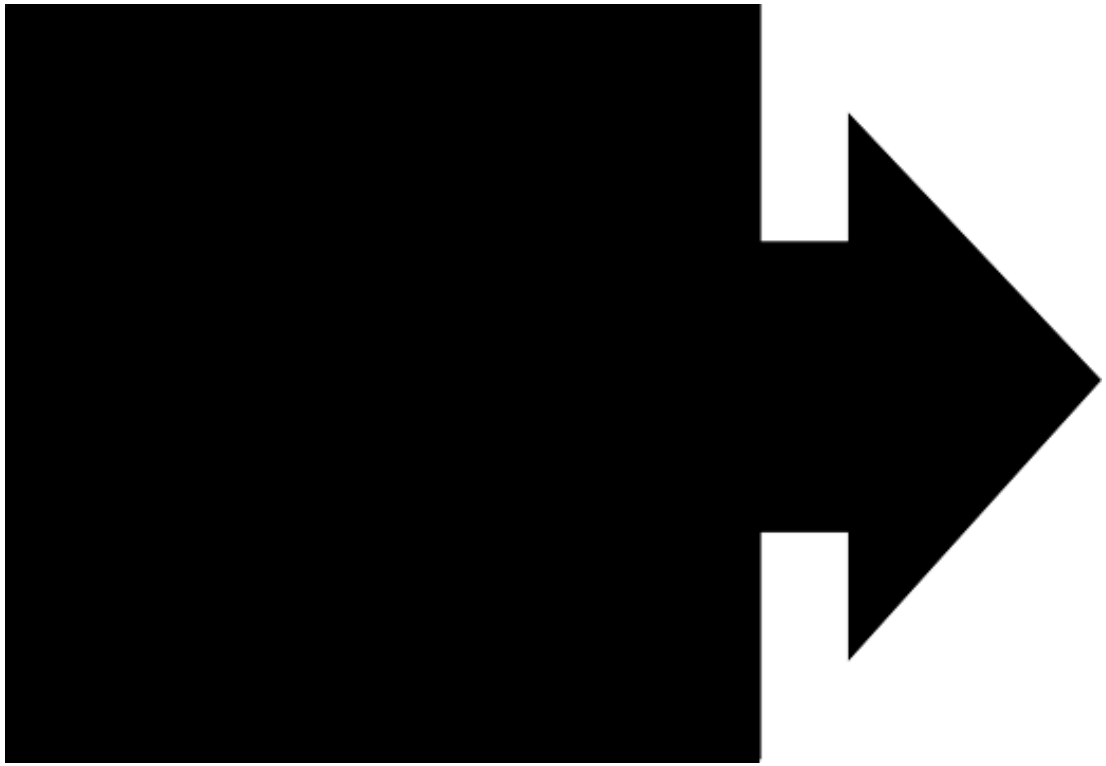
Chapter 4

Implement and Assess Programs



Introduction

Your work so far brings you to the all-important process of implementing your selected program(s). You will see that good implementation involves much more than simply carrying out the components of the program. Planning and documentation are critical to the success of program implementation.

With good program implementation and clear documentation of program process and function, the decision makers in your organization maintain knowledge and control over what's happening throughout the program's implementation. They can immediately assess and react if and/or when something goes wrong. This requires extensive documentation. However, the good news is that this documentation ensures that your efforts will be consistently productive and it is unlikely that you will be faced with surprises (i.e., failure of anticipated outcomes and impacts). Finally, the ease with which you can complete your evaluation, if you have maintained proper documentation throughout the program, is quite amazing and well worth the extra time that the planning and ongoing documentation require.

There are two very useful tools that can be used to organize and maintain this necessary documentation. First, there is the logic model, which is a graphic depiction of the program that you have developed or selected for your identified population. If you have observed that the program logic model bears a close resemblance to your theory of change, you are absolutely correct. In fact, if you refer back to pages 25-28 in Chapter 1, you will see both a theory of change AND a program logic model in the making. Setting it up in a graphic format simply makes it easier to understand. The program logic model focuses on the overall program or coalition effort and what it is intended to achieve. Often a program developer will offer a logic model as part of the dissemination package. If you are using a SAMHSA evidence-based program, logic models are available on SAMHSA's Web site at www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov. If not, you will create a logic model for the program you are using or developing in order to:

- guide you properly through the implementation process with respect for the fidelity/adaptation balance that will preserve the evidence base of the programs you are implementing, or, if you are innovating, establishes the theory of change you will soon be testing.

- ensure that your partners, staff, and community share a common understanding of what the program(s) is to achieve;
- provide a credible framework for the evaluation you will soon be completing.

Most programs* have more than one component, more than one set of activities or objectives that contribute to goal achievement (see chapter 1, as well as the logic models in this chapter). This is because there is usually more than one risk and/or protective factor that needs to be addressed by the program, and each requires a different set of activities. If you take each of these steps, or components, individually and describe graphically what should be done to achieve the desired outcomes (which serve as the immediate or intermediate outcomes for the program overall), you will have component logic models as well. Breaking down the logic model into its components clarifies the implementation process for staff and facilitators and makes it significantly easier to complete an evaluation.

The second handy tool is the action plan, which is a working outline of the tasks you should complete to implement the components and the program logic model. The action plan outlines every task to be accomplished, who is responsible for each task, and the results after implementation. Action plans keep everyone informed about what is going on and provide the nuts and bolts for the evaluation report.

It is this extensive documentation during implementation that will provide the data needed to complete your evaluation. For example, if your immediate or intermediate outcomes are less than expected, the documentation process inherent in PATHWAYS will enable you to go back and see where adjustments might be made so you can ensure your final outcomes.

This chapter shows how logic models and action plans can be used to facilitate this critical documentation process. The discussion continues in chapter 5 as the evaluation process is completed.

**As used throughout this publication, the term "program" refers to the sum total of organized, structured interventions, including environmental initiatives, designed to change social, physical, fiscal, or policy conditions within a definable geographic area or for a defined population.*

Important Terms

Action Plan: Translates the theory of change represented by a logic model into an operational plan, detailing the key tasks that should be completed, including the measurement of outcomes.

Adaptation: Modification made to original plan for implementation and/or evaluation of a chosen intervention (e.g., qualitative and/or quantitative changes to components); changes in audience, setting, and/or intensity of program delivery, and in evaluating changes to research design, measures, or analysis.

Baseline Data: The initial information collected prior to the implementation of a program, against which outcomes can be compared at strategic points during, and at completion of, an intervention.

Component Logic Model: See Logic Model.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI): The systematic assessment and feedback of information about planning, implementation, and outcomes and use of this information to improve programs.

Core Components: Program elements that are demonstrably essential to achieving positive outcomes.

Fidelity: On a continuum of high to low, where high represents the closest adherence to the developer's design, the degree of fit between the developer-defined components of a substance abuse prevention intervention and its actual implementation in a given organizational or community setting. In operational terms, the rigor with which an intervention adheres to the developer's model.

Fidelity/Adaptation Balance: A dynamic process that addresses both the need for fidelity to the original program model and the demonstrable need for local adaptation.

Goal: The clearly stated, specific, measurable outcome(s) or change(s) that can be reasonably expected at the conclusion of a methodically selected intervention.

Immediate Outcome: The initial change in a sequence of changes expected to occur as a result of program implementation.

Impact: The long-term effect and/or influence of the program on the conditions described in baseline data.

Implementation Plan: As used in this publication, a planning tool for the program manager. The plan need not be more detailed than that required by the program manager to establish initial direction and clarity of vision for the implementation group.

Intermediate Outcomes: In a sequence of changes expected to occur in a program, the changes that are measured subsequent to immediate change, but prior to the long-term changes that are measured at program completion. Depending on the theory of change guiding the intervention, an intermediate outcome in one intervention may be an immediate or long-term outcome in another.

Logic Model: A graphic depiction of the theory of, or pathway to, change that provides the underlying rationale for a program. It includes the approaches and activities that specifically address the underlying risk and protective factors and specifies the expected immediate and intermediate outcomes, or objectives, and the expected long-term outcomes, or goals.

Long-term Outcomes: Over time, the permanent change(s) that result from the program or intervention,

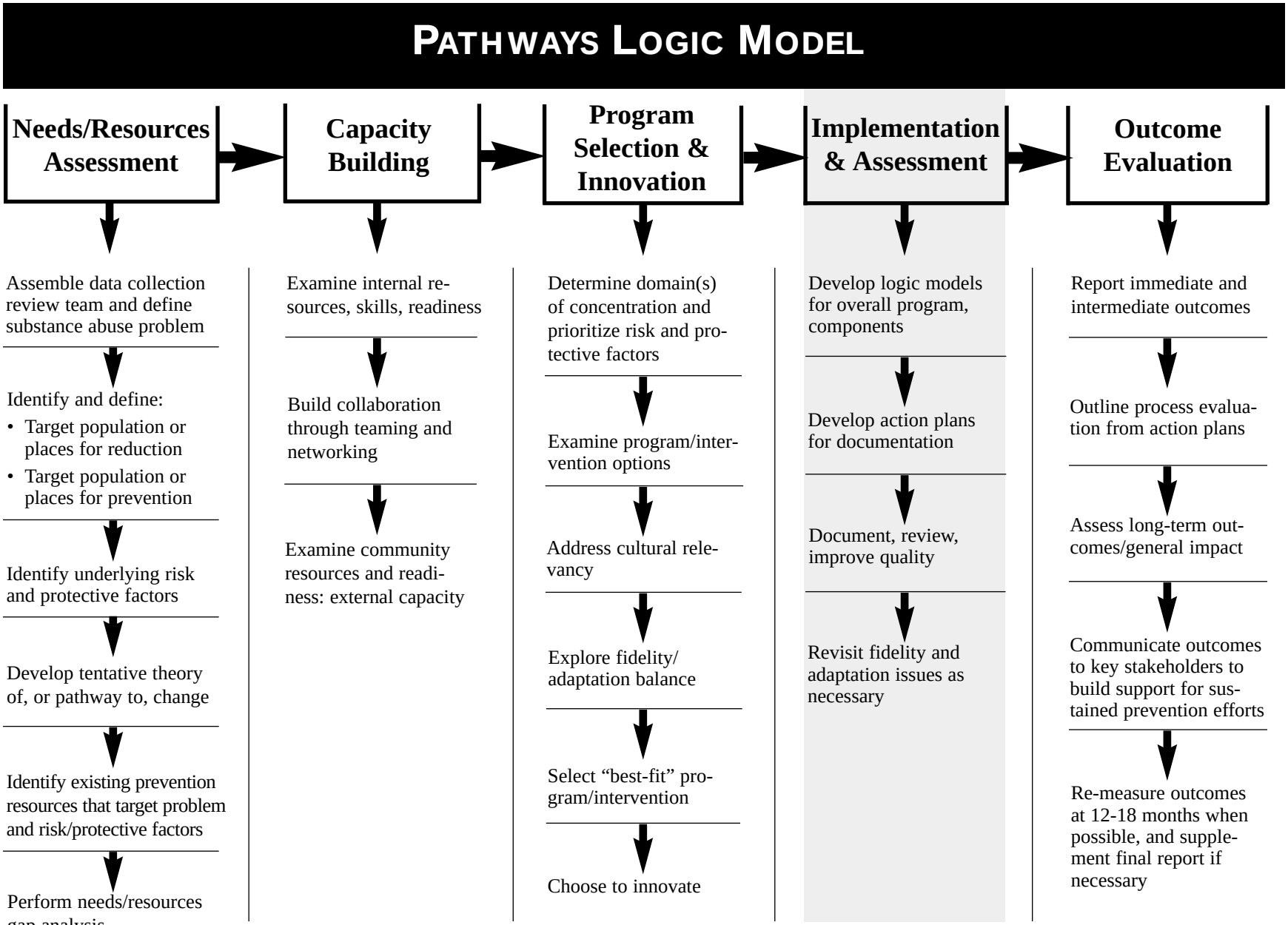
Objectives: As used in this publication, measurable statements of the expected change in risk and protective factors, or other underlying conditions, as expressed in the program's guiding theory of, or pathway to, change.

Outcomes: The extent of change in targeted attitudes, values, behaviors, or conditions between baseline measurement and subsequent points of measurement. Depending on the nature of the program and the theory of, or pathway to, change guiding it, changes can be immediate, intermediate, or long-term outcomes.

Process Measures: Measures of participation, "dosage," staffing, and other factors related to implementation. Process measures are *not* outcomes, because they describe events that are inputs to, or throughputs of, the delivery of a program.

Program Logic Model: See Logic Model.

PATHWAYS Program Logic Model



Logic Model Discussion for Program Implementation and Assessment

The PATHWAYS logic model on the previous page shows how the Implementation/Assessment component (the shaded column) fits into the overall framework for PATHWAYS. The activities and tasks that make up the program Implementation/Assessment component are described below.

Program Implementation Action Steps

- **Develop Logic Models for Overall Program, Components**
  - — Guided by theory of change, write succeeding descriptive phrases to identify (in developmental sequence if applicable):
    - Each component (addressing an underlying risk or protective factor) that will bring about the change needed (objective)*
    - Your goal (final outcome and impact)**

- **Develop Action Plans for Documentation**
  - — Restate objectives, goals in measurable terms using your needs assessment data (baseline)
  - — Indicate "who" will measure "what," "when," and "how" as you track:
    - the implementation of your program or initiative
    - difference between expected and actual immediate and intermediate outcomes
  - — Specify procedures, adaptations, and person(s) in charge of:
    - recruitment and maintenance, including participant attendance and attrition
    - organizational capacity issues
    - ongoing quality review
    - documentation

- **Document, Review, Improve Quality**
  - — Document and improve for ongoing quality improvement:
    - participants' demographics, methods of recruitment, actual attendance, attrition
    - program/intervention issues: planned & unplanned adaptations; cultural problems/issues; indicators of unmet need(s)/ resource(s)development
    - Implementation problems/issues relative to organizational capacity and community readiness
    - Un- or under-realized outcomes: Differences between expected and actual outcomes

- **Revisit Fidelity and Adaptation Issues as Necessary**

* as measured by change between baseline measure of risk/protective factor and new measure after completion of component
** as measured by change between baseline measure of general substance abuse problem and new measure after completion of component

The Importance of Planning and Documentation

While implementation generally refers exclusively to program activities, the implementation process in *Pathways* actually begins with planning. Planning is pivotal to a successful outcome and, if done carefully, will make evaluation tasks much easier. Planning helps increase the effectiveness of your effort by enabling you to focus energy, ensure that staff and other stakeholders are working toward the same goals, and assess and adjust programmatic direction, if needed. In short, planning is a structured effort to shape and guide your prevention efforts. With proper planning, you can avoid many of the problems that can undermine the success of your work.

PATHWAYS uses two simple tools, logic models and action plans, as the framework for this planning process. Here are the implementation tools preferred for PATHWAYS:

- *Logic Model*—A program logic model is a graphic depiction of the theory of change that provides the underlying rationale for a program. It includes the strategies and activities that specifically address the underlying needs and resources and specifies the expected immediate and *intermediate outcomes*, or objectives, and the expected long-term outcomes, or goals. A component logic model takes one of the program's core components and treats it as if it were a program itself. It outlines the theory of change within that single component.
- *Action Plan*—Translates the logic model into an operational plan or chart that shows the key tasks to be completed. A good action plan details "who" in your organization will be doing "what," "to whom," "for what purpose," "when," and "for how long." You will find it useful to develop action plans for the program logic model as well as for the component logic models.

Logic models focus on the conceptual structure and links between assumptions, activities, and outcomes. In essence, logic models graphically portray the program itself: the activities designed to change attitudes, skills, knowledge, and behaviors. They depict the pathway to long-term change. Action plans, on the other hand, are operational; they detail all the tasks that need to be completed so that the program can be delivered and outcomes can be measured, analyzed, and documented for ongoing control and improvement when necessary. In addition to documenting who, what, etc., they document immediate and intermediate outcomes. They call attention to the need for remedial action when immediate or intermediate outcomes

are not achieved. It is important to keep in mind throughout this process that positive outcomes can be achieved only if the substantive elements of the program are:

1. Delivered by people who are capable and skilled with respect to formulating and delivering the substantive messages embodied in the program and are skilled with respect to networking, mobilizing, advocating, articulating, and pursuing change.

2. Received by the people for whom the substantive message is intended, and

3. Received by a sufficient number of people over a sufficient period of time to make a difference in baseline substance abuse measures.

Together, logic models and action plans are helpful in producing process evaluations, because they document the unfolding of planned, unplanned, and alternative activities that have contributed to outcomes. Action plans, in particular, provide the outline for a process evaluation. They are a useful tool for managers in tracking outcomes and implementation issues. Action plans are also useful for facilitating timely communication between implementators and stakeholders about both successes and areas of concern.

Logic models and action plans sound complicated, but they are really user-friendly, effective tools once you gain some experience using them. Figure 4.1 shows a program logic model for a SAMHSA model program; Figure 4.2 shows a component logic model for the same program. Later in this chapter we will look at how logic models might be developed for different types of coalitions.

Documentation goes hand in hand with planning in the PATHWAYS process. Documentation is critical to systematic implementation, ongoing evaluation, and adaptation. The documentation that you undertake while implementing your program (using your action plans) is also essential to your evaluation report. Chapter 4 works in concert with chapter 5. Additional discussion of some of the important concepts in your documentation process (e.g., *process measures*, immediate and intermediate outcomes, etc.) occurs in chapter 5. You should read chapter 5 and refer to it as necessary as you create and implement your logic models and action plans.

Since documentation is really a component of evaluation as well as implementation, be sure to involve your evaluation team as early in the process as possible. Evaluation works best as a team effort. One person heads the team and has primary responsibility for the project with assistance from other staff and volunteers. (You, the practitioner, need not be the team leader.) Together, your evaluation team does the following:

- Determines the design and measurement issues related to the evaluation;
- Develops the evaluation plan, outcome measures, and data collection instruments;
- Collects, analyzes, and interprets data; and
- Prepares the report on evaluation findings.

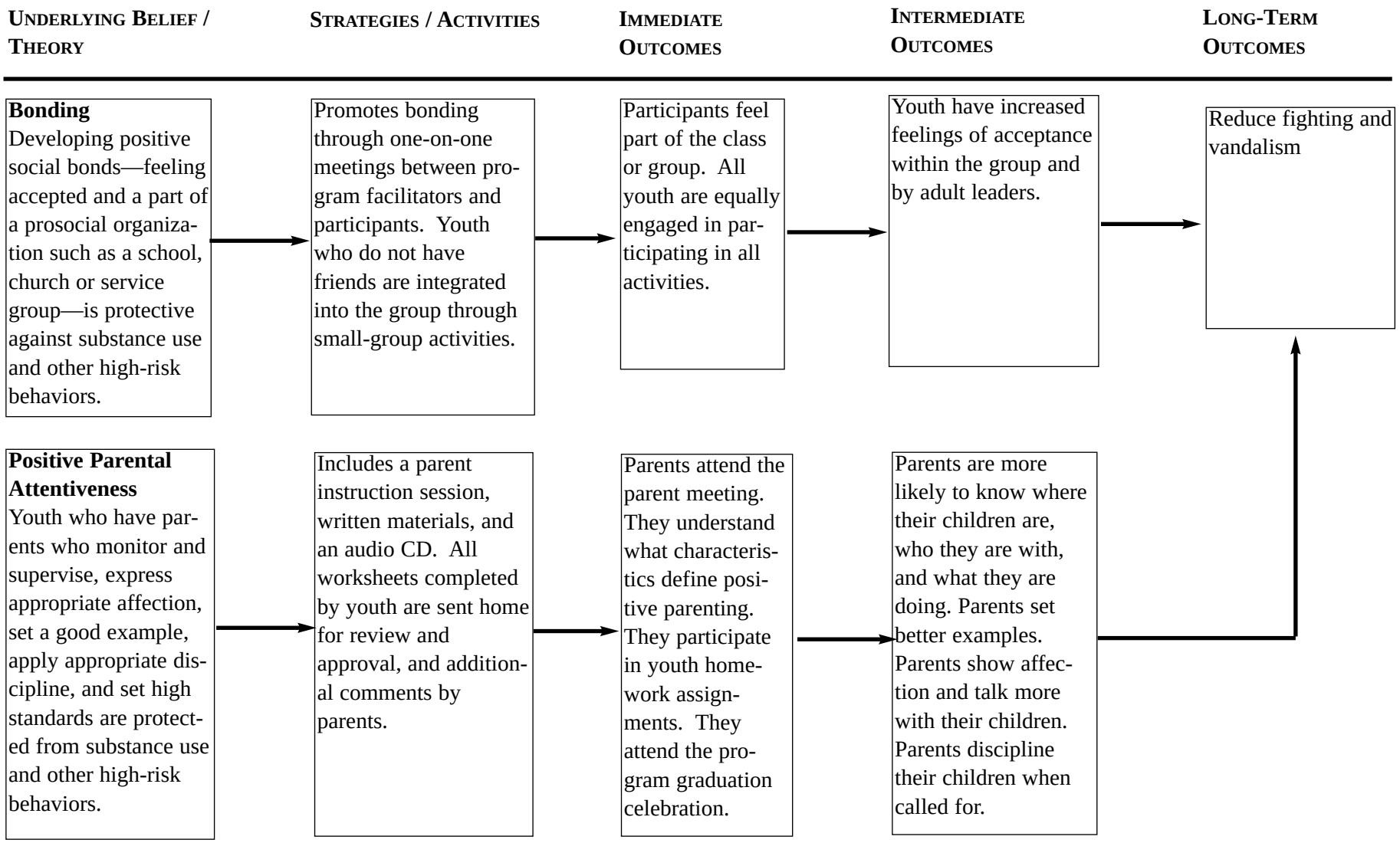
If you have developed this plan on your own, without the resources of a professional evaluator, your work will be considerably enhanced by a review and critical discussion with an experienced evaluator.

Implementation success requires that:

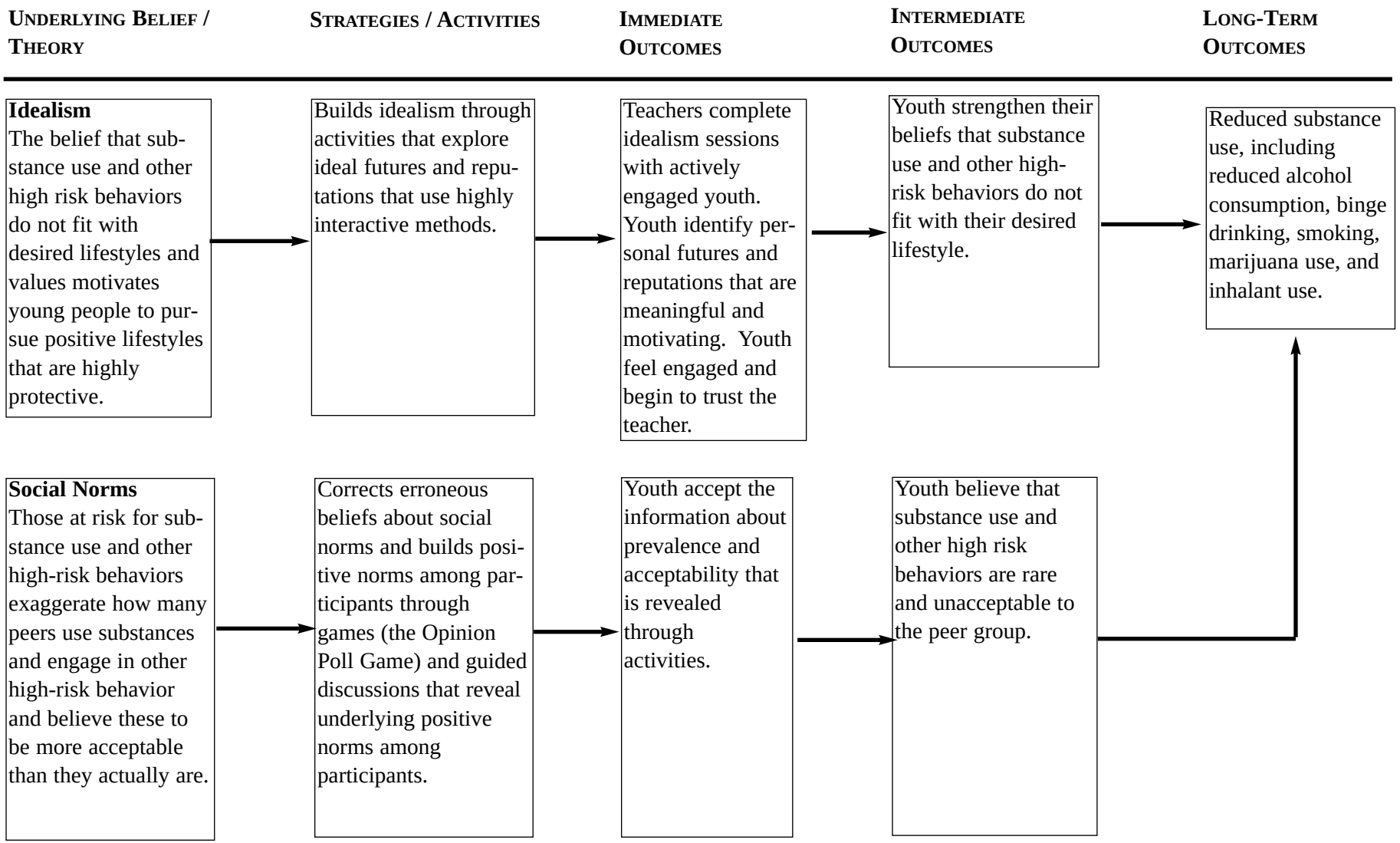
- The program be delivered by skilled facilitators
- The program be received by the proper audience
- The program be delivered to a sufficient number of people over a sufficient period of time
- The program be delivered as intended/ designed (dosage)

Figure 4.1 Sample Logic Model

Sample Logic Model (Part I)



Sample Logic Model (Part II)



Developing Logic Models

A program logic model is a graphic depiction of the theory of, or pathway to, change that provides the underlying rationale for a program. It includes the strategies and activities that specifically address underlying needs and resources and specifies the expected immediate and intermediate outcomes, or objectives, and the expected long-term outcomes, or goals. Notice how the Logic Model example (Fig. 4.1) uses the key program components to illustrate how the specific risk and protective factors are expected to change (objectives) so that the long-term outcome (goal) can be realized.

Consider these questions as you formulate your program logic model:

- What are the components of the selected program that address each of the underlying risk and protective factors you have listed for your population or area of interest?
- Is there a developmental sequence to these components, and, if so, what is the proper sequence?
- What are the changes you expect to see in each of the underlying risk factors (your objectives) that you have identified?
- What is the long-term outcome (your goal) that the program will achieve?

Guided by the theory of change for your program, write successive statements to identify each component that addresses an underlying risk or protective factors that will help bring about the changes needed (the objectives) to achieve your goal (long-term outcomes): the final box or circle (or whatever graphic element you are using) of your logic model.

If you are implementing a single program, and you have selected a SAMHSA model or effective program, it is likely that the program developer has already created a logic model for you to consider. However, that logic model was not created using your defined population's unique risk and protective factors. You may still have to develop your own logic model to address not only those unique factors, but also any adaptations you will be making to the program.

Even if you are not making adaptations, you will want to develop your own program logic model following the guidelines in this chapter. These guidelines are likely to be more detailed than the process followed by the developer. More importantly, the process of putting your concepts into a tangible form helps ensure that you and others have consensus.

The graphic format you choose to depict your logic model may look quite different from the boxes and arrows used in this publication's examples of logic models. Any graphic format is fine, so long as it is clear, comprehensible, and usable by all.

At its most basic level, a component logic model takes one of the program's core components and treats it as if it were a program itself. It outlines the theory of change within that single component. In other words, while the program logic model identifies the key components of the program, the component logic models identify the theory of change within each of the components.

You develop a component logic model using the same process described for the program logic model. Each of the activities that makes up the components of your program can be specified (See Figure 4.2, which shows a component logic model for *one* of the components that make up the All-Stars Program Logic Model). The component logic model is your map for this process. The component action plan provides the documentation.

Also review the discussion of immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes in chapter 5. These are the outcomes that you expect after completion of each program component that are critical to achievement of your goals.

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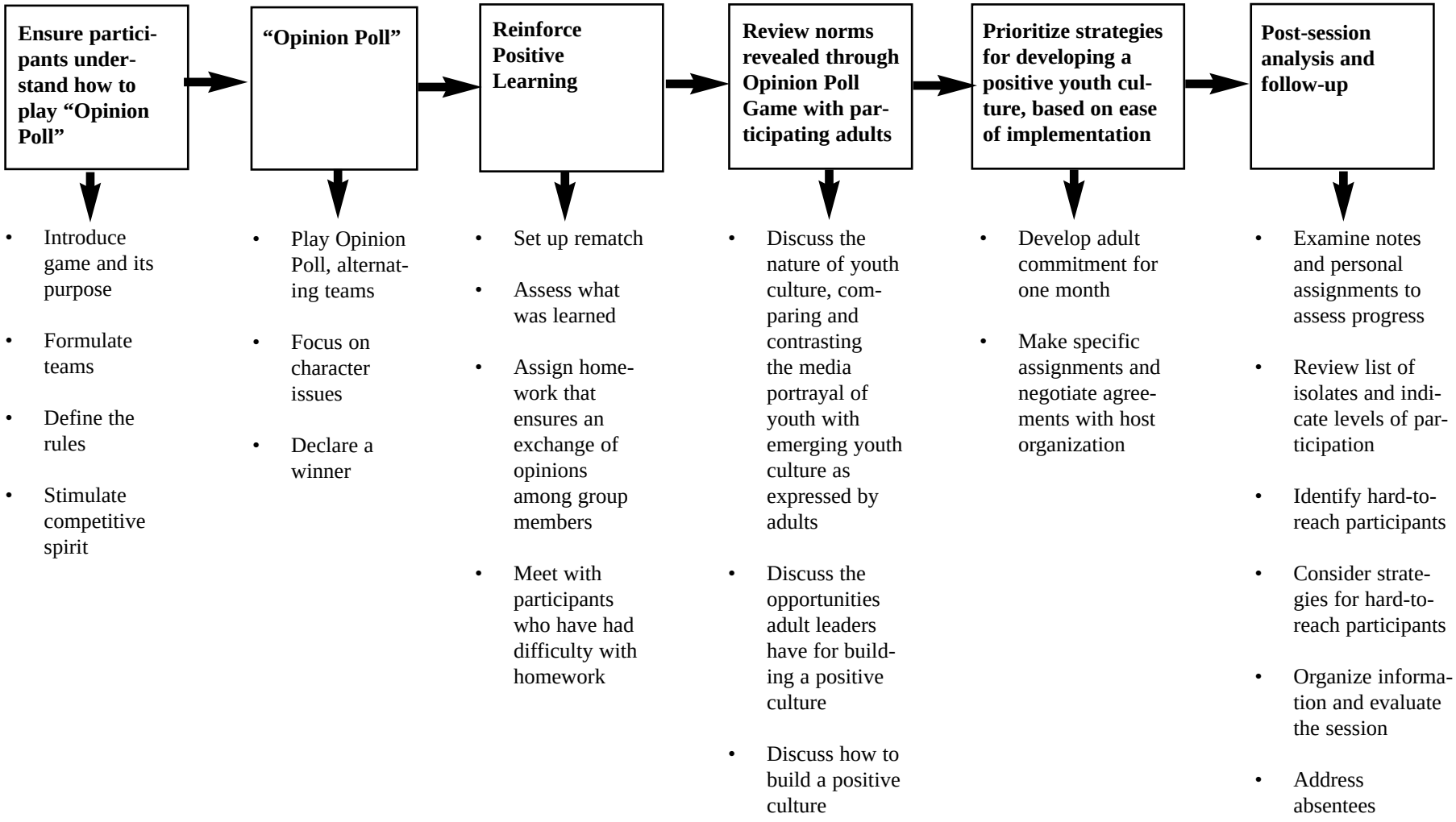
Logic Model Design

The graphic format you choose to depict your logic model may look quite different from the boxes and arrows used in this publication's examples of logic models.

Any graphic format is fine, so long as it is clear, comprehensible, and usable by all.

Figure 4-2: Component Logic Model: Building a Positive Norm About High-Risk Behaviors



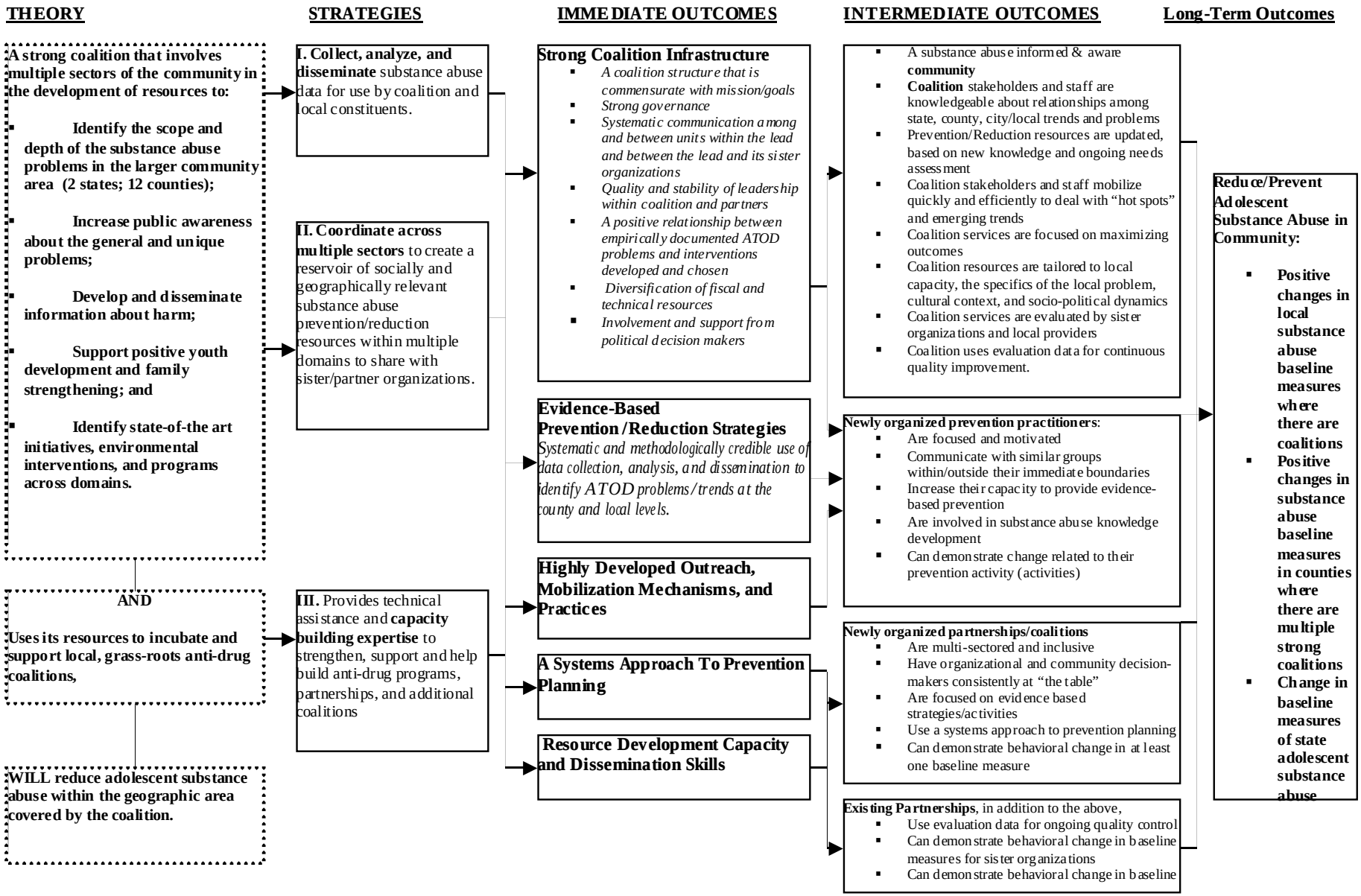
Logic Models for Coalitions and Programs Involving Multiple Agencies or Providers

Developing a logic model for a coalition or for programs involving multiple agencies or providers is somewhat different from a single program logic model. Coalition logic models and those for programs involving multiple agencies or providers account for the fact that their organizational structure (programs involving multiple agencies or providers usually have a lead agency) serves a programmatic and/or service delivery function. In fact, coalitions are referred to by some as "environmental" programs or initiatives. Thus, logic models in these cases need to address the breadth and depth of group activities. Often, component logic models are developed by the coalition partner or agency member. For example, if a community recreation center is delivering a particular program as one component of a county-wide coalition, the center's staff, rather than the coalition, might develop its logic model (or use one available through the program developer) and action plans. However, that program—as well as those delivered by other members of the coalition—would be reflected in the coalition's overall logic model.

As coalitions are not all organized alike, there can be no single coalition logic model template. Figure 4.3 shows a somewhat elaborate logic model that might be used by an umbrella coalition that serves as the organizing entity for a host of secondary coalitions and partnerships over a broad geographic area. The primary strategies of such a coalition, as the logic model shows, are to galvanize and share resources, engage in data collection and analysis for a broad area, share that data with local communities within the broader area, and assist those communities in developing their own partnerships and programs based on local need. These partnerships then become members of the greater collaborative.

Remember this is only one of several coalition structures, and each of the partner coalitions would each have its own logic model.

Figure 4.3: Umbrella Coalition Logic Model



Developing Action Plans

The action plan translates the program and component logic models into a practical operational plan. You can also think of it as a detailed "to-do" list. The action plan organizes your general implementation effort, guiding you and your staff as you strive to implement each component to its maximum potential. Action plans also assign responsibility for program activities; provide opportunities and space to record outcomes; and identify, track, and measure the results of adaptations when they occur.

Like logic models, action plans come in many forms and vary in their complexity. The format is not important as long as it can be clearly followed by others. While the level of detail will vary, the action plan for the program logic model is relatively brief (Figure 4.5 is a sample action plan to accompany a SAMHSA program logic model). Note that the term "implementation plan" is often used interchangeably with the term "action plan." Later, you will develop a separate action plan for each component in order to record more details.

Action plans are useful tools, especially for program directors. They have innumerable uses in organizing the effort, budgeting, managing the process, coordinating communications, documenting progress, and evaluating results. Here are some items to cover in your action plans:

- The successive tasks that should be completed by staff or partners before the program or component can begin;
- The delegation of authority and responsibility for task completion;
- Timelines associated with each task, including planned start, actual start, planned end, actual end;
- How and why adaptations are needed and to what effect;
- Who will be responsible for measuring, analyzing, and communicating with staff (and others as needed) differences between expected and actual change; and
- Who will be responsible for maintaining general documentation of the process overall.

Begin your general program action plan (implementation plan) by restating your goal in measurable terms, using needs assessment data (e.g., to prevent and/or to reduce _____ and/or _____ by _____). Then decide and indicate who will handle the measurement, and when and how measures will be taken. Finally, you need to specify the plans, procedures, and person(s) in charge for ongoing quality review (as detailed later in this chapter), organizational capacity issues (see chapter 2), and full documentation as implementation progresses.

You may wish to add detail to this program action plan, such as participant data (e.g., how many participants are expected to attend what/for how long). However, as noted above, you can save the detail for the component action plans. Either way, remember to keep the action plan current by documenting changes in assignments, timelines, and other significant operational matters.

The more thoughtfully you develop and track activities, issues, and outcomes on your action plans, the easier it will be for you to pinpoint any problems, take corrective action, and produce the results you expect. In short, comprehensive action plans will minimize your evaluation tasks.

Component action plans keep track of the who, what, where, when, how, and for how long for each of the activities within the program components. Unlike the overall program action plan, however, the component action plans will be quite detailed, sometimes extending for many pages. Again, this is a chart of everything that needs to be done as part of your intervention. For instance, as we have shown on pages 110-111, the program logic model for the All Stars Program includes four components. Each of these components requires its own separate action plan to chart all the work that needs to be accomplished and who will be responsible.

Begin each component action plan by restating the change you expect after completion of that component (e.g., “to increase academic core competencies for 12 of the 15 participants by at least one grade level within six months”). You may remember that the change you expect after completing a component is also called an objective. Identify the activities that will enable you to meet each objective. Document on your action plan who will be responsible for each component and/or activity. Develop a very specific timeline. Keep track of participant attendance for each activity and make sure to note any unusual occurrence, positive or negative. Such information will be very helpful as you evaluate to address questions about outcomes. Remember to indicate the immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes that you expect, how they will be measured, and by whom.

After completion of the activities for each component, you will record the actual amount of change. This will be the change between the baseline measure and your subsequent measures of the underlying condition the component was designed to address. This is actually part of the evaluation process and may be one of your evaluator's tasks, depending on how your evaluation team is organized.

Should actual outcomes fall short of your expectations, examine your component action plans. Look for problems encountered during implementation. Review planned (or unplanned) adaptations. Consider cultural issues. A team meeting that includes the staff member responsible for the component in question may yield insight about why expectations were not met.

A problem of unmet expectations may stem not from the implementation process itself but from the initial needs and resources assessment, which may have failed to dig deep enough into the needs of your defined population. A detailed, thoroughly documented action plans allows you not only see where you are going but where you have been. You can retrace your steps to explain why a component did or did not work as expected.

In the following example, the father was not ready for the family strengthening component being presented. Deeper analysis of his needs and resources clarified a need for training in basic parenting skills as a prerequisite for more advanced family strengthening concepts.

Example: "Dealing with Unmet Outcome Expectations"

A facilitator in a family strengthening project reported to the project director that one of the youngsters had reported that his father had "thrown my brother out of the car." Fearing child abuse, the project director notified the facilitator for the parent group, only to learn that the father had, indeed, thrown the child out of the car—but not in such literal terms. The father, faced with a temper tantrum on the part of the seven-year-old, ordered the child out of the car and revoked his privilege to attend the event to which the family was headed. Clearly the father had assimilated some of the principles presented in the parenting class. But by leaving a seven-year-old unsupervised in the yard when the family left, the father put the program director and facilitators on notice that more basic parenting skills needed to be learned before the strategies of the family strengthening program could be successfully implemented. Additional assessment for the group in which the father was a participant revealed that many in the group could benefit from a precursor to the program that had been selected.

Action Plan Details

- Restate goal in measurable terms using baseline data
- Identify and sequence activities according to whether they lead to immediate or intermediate outcomes.
- Indicate when and how immediate and intermediate outcomes will be measured and by whom.
- Specify any planned adaptations.
- Repeat additional sets of activities.
- Establish process for ongoing review.

Fig. 4.4: Program Manager Action Plan

	Activity	Facilitator and Assistant	Date of Implementation
Underlying Issue Youth who believe high-risk behaviors to be unpopular among their peers are protected from participating in them. **Lesson Objective** Participants will understand that high-risk behaviors (substance use, bullying, premature sexual activity) are unacceptable. Standing up for commitments, remaining drug-free, and giving others respect are qualities to be emulated.	Opinion Poll Game	Class 7A Claire Soast/ Brenda Schooler	
		Class 7B John Matthews/ Linda Ohashi	
		Class 8A Tom Vitullo/ Norma Austin	
		Class 8B Jean Hamilton/ Verna Sanchez	

Fig. 4-4: Program Manager's Action Plan, continued

Class	**Attendance Youth/Adult**	**Observations Attached**	**Materials & prep reviewed**	**Intermediate Outcomes** Change in normative beliefs measured by the *Interactions with Antisocial Peers Scale* from *Student Survey of Risk and Protective Factors* (1998)	**Final Outcomes** 3 months post-program completion
7A	___Youths ___ Adults	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes ___ No	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance
7B	___Youths ___ Adults	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes ___ No	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance
8A	___Youths ___ Adults	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes ___ No	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance
8B	___Youths ___ Adults	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes ___ No	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance	_____ % Tested _____ Date _____ % Change p= Significance

Fig. 4.5: Teacher's Action Plan

Preparation	**Comments/Observations/ Outcomes**	**Session Review** (5 minutes)	**Comments/Observations/ Outcomes**
__ Gather necessary materials. ❑ Program Banner ❑ Standards for Getting Along poster ❑ Small prizes (optional) ❑ Marker board or easel ❑ Marking pens ❑ Opinion Poll Survey results __ Arrange room with space for competition and answer/score recording. __ Invite a group participant to act as an assistant who will keep score. __ Prepare assistant (Brenda Schooler) for tasks. __ Decide questions in Opinion Poll Survey to include and exclude.	Attendance: _____ Absent: Follow-up on absentees: Student assistant: Other comments:	__ Display Standards for Getting Along for all participants to see. __ Remind participants of their commitment to the Standards. __ Prepare assistant to meet immediately following the session. __ Welcome guests by asking them to introduce themselves to the group. __ Review last session: ❑ Ask participants what they remember from last session. ❑ Ask participants "What is the Law of the Harvest?" __ Perform pre-test using the *Interactions with Antisocial Peers Scale* from *Student Survey of Risk and Protective Factors* (1998). __ Discuss Homework ❑ Have participants organize into homework teams (if they were created). ❑ Remind participants of the homework assignment. ❑ Have participants report about their parents' reaction to their homework assignment. ❑ Have participants present their parents' answers. ❑ Have participants summarize what they learned from the homework.	

Fig. 4.5: Teacher's Action Plan, continued

Set up the Opinion Poll Game (5 minutes)	**Comments/Observations/Outcomes**
__ Introduce The Opinion Poll Game to the group. Explain that it will test their understanding of what other people in their group think. __ Form teams and seat team members together __ Define the rules of play • Teams will alternate turns • The team that is up will try to guess answers others gave to the opinion poll survey • Team members will take turns guessing the answers to the questions • If a guess is correct, the team will get the number of points equal to the number of people in the group who gave that answer. • If they guess wrong, the team will get a strike • If the team guesses all the answers, they keep their points • If the team gets three strikes, the opposing team will have one chance to steal all the points by guessing a missing answer • Only one person on a team can speak at a time. If anyone else speaks they will automatically get a strike. If someone on the opposing team talks out of turn, they will start with a strike when it is their turn. • You will be the final judge on all questions. __ Create competition • Have teams select a captain and a name • Encourage spirit of competition	

Fig. 4-5: Teacher's Action Plan, continued

The Game is Afoot (45 minutes)	**Comments/Observations/ Outcomes**	**Conclusion and Homework (5 minutes)**	**Comments/Observations/ Outcomes**
__ Play the game, alternating teams. __ Keep track of questions used. __ Focus on character issues. ❑ Discuss questions that deal with high-risk behaviors and character issues. ❑ Ask students what each answer tells them about the people in their group. ❑ Ask probing questions and encourage discussion. ❑ Encourage reflection on answers. __ Declare a winner. ❑ Play until all questions are answered or time has run out. ❑ Make sure each team has an equal number of times up. ❑ Provide a treat or prize if one is available.		__ Set up a rematch. ❑ Point out unused questions. ❑ Ask losing team if they would like a rematch. ❑ Tell when the rematch will happen. __ Ask participants and assistants: ❑ "What did you learn today?" ❑ "What do the answers that were given tell about how this group thinks about risky behaviors?" ❑ "What do the answers tell you about how to get respect from others?" __ Give homework assignment. __ You may distribute copies of the Opinion Poll Results Tally Sheets or post answers. __ Thank guests for attending. __ Invite guests to share thoughts or impressions. __ Meet with and help individuals who had difficulty completing the home work. ❑ Have participants summarize what they learned from the home-work.	**Who won?** **Rematch date:** **Sample guest thoughts/ impressions:** **Who needed help?**

Fig. 4.5: Teacher's Action Plan, continued

Strategies for Success – Positive Cultures (10 minutes)	**Comments/Observations/ Outcomes**	**Post-Session Analysis and Follow-Up (30 minutes)**	**Comments/Observations/ Outcomes**
__ Review today's session with adult leaders: ❑ Have adults guess participants' answers. ❑ Share answers to pertinent questions. __ Discuss youth culture. ❑ Contrast rival portrayals. __ Discuss the opportunity leaders have for building a positive culture. __ Discuss how to build a positive culture: ❑ Ask about participants' own positive childhood influences. ❑ Encourage creativity. ❑ Identify ideas which can be implemented immediately. ❑ Make specific assignments to individuals and organizations about what they can do in the next month ❑ Come to specific agreements about what the host organization can do ❑ Answer questions and address concerns	Assignments to participants: Assignments to host organization:	__ Review plans. ❑ Was observable progress made today? __ Consider isolates. ❑ Review list of isolates ❑ Did each actively participate in discussion or activities? __ Consider assistants. ❑ Review list of assistants. ❑ How supportive was each assistant in helping achieve session objectives? ❑ What comments did the assistant contribute to group discussion? ❑ How did the assistant contribute during the small group activity? ❑ How well did the assistant internalize the standards discussed in the group? __ Identify hard-to-reach participants. ❑ Identify participants who did not respond well ❑ Consider strategies to approach these participants in the future	**Today's progress:** **Isolates and their participation:** **Assistants and their helpfulness:** **Hard-to-reach participants:** **Strategies for reaching hard-to-reach participants:**

Maintaining Continuous Quality Control

Think of your logic models and the action plan for each component as living documents, to be reviewed regularly and modified when necessary. Your implementation team should routinely review the plans to see if you are on target or if mid-course adjustments are needed. The process that is popular in business circles, known as *Continuous Quality Improvement* (CQI), may help. Continuous Quality Improvement is the systematic assessment and feedback of evaluation information about planning, implementation, and outcomes (Senge, 1994) and the use of that information to improve programs.

Regular review of your program and component logic models and, especially, your action plans should be systemized within your organization. This is a crucial step in the success of your implementation, as well as your evaluation. Routine review enables you to do the following:

- Document program components that work well;
- Identify where improvements need to be made;
- Provide feedback to staff or others who can implement the strategies more effectively;
- Make timely adjustments in activities and programming to better address the desired outcomes;
- Provide information for keeping others informed (including the media), if applicable; and
- Determine if enough resources have been leveraged. Where might you find more?

Here are some of the specific areas to document as part of your action plan as you monitor implementation:

- Participant information
  - —Demographics
  - —Methods of recruitment
  - —Actual attendance
  - —Attrition

- Program/Intervention issues
  - —Planned and unplanned adaptations

—Cultural problems/issues
—Indicators of unmet needs/resources development

- Implementation problems/issues
  —Organizational capacity
  —Community readiness

- Un- or under-realized outcomes
  —The differences between expected and actual change (outcomes) as measured by the change between baseline and new measures at the completion of a component

Routine review of your action plans can prevent you from proceeding with a program that is not working. It provides feedback on day-to-day operations, which enables you to make timely adjustments in programming and activities to ensure a more direct path to the outcomes you seek.

Reviewing your action plans has another benefit. It involves the stakeholders in the decisionmaking process for improving the program. They receive feedback on the impact of what they are doing and can use this feedback to guide decisions. For instance, if feedback shows that participants in a training session are not grasping the concepts being taught, you may decide to alter or intensify the teaching methods. Or, it may be that the teaching methods are not inadequate, but rather that the participants lack the "readiness" to grasp the concepts. With continuous review of your component logic models and action plans, you can identify obstacles to success early, while there is still time to make adjustments.

Revisiting Fidelity and Adaptation Issues *During* Implementation

Evidence-based programs need to be followed as rigorously as possible. Real life tells us, however, that adaptations may be needed, as discussed in chapter 3. The adaptation discussed in that chapter occurred prior to implementation. You may also find that adaptation is necessary after your program is underway. Here are two real-life examples:

Examples: "When Adaptation Might Be Needed"

A large organization with 30 years of experience in substance abuse prevention decided to implement an evidence-based program. After much research, it selected a program that had been successfully replicated many times and with many different defined populations. One of the major components of this program involved providing in-home therapeutic programs for all family members.

While all of the implementation steps were appropriately followed, the implementers began to notice that certain families were not achieving some of the intermediate outcomes. Further analysis uncovered that this happened with greater frequency among families of a particular culture, and that these families were often not home when the prevention specialist arrived to deliver the programs (even after confirming that the family members would be there). It was later learned that these families were uncomfortable when outsiders (even outsiders from their own culture) came into their home. Rather than address this issue directly, they expressed their discomfort by avoiding the in-home sessions.

Similarly, a community coalition, whose mission was to develop strong families within their community, decided to implement an evidence-based program with a group of families identified as needing a range of family programs. The coalition researched the options available and selected an evidence-based program that included multiple family components and programs.

This program had been successfully replicated in many locations with a broad range of defined populations. During implementation, however, the coalition's staff noticed that certain predicted intermediate outcomes associated with a particular parenting skills component of this evidence-based program were not occurring. After additional needs assessment, they discovered that this particular defined population had generational histories of extremely poor parenting practices, and that the practices being taught in the evidence-based program assumed a more advanced foundation of parenting skills.

Sometimes the need for adaptation does not become clear until the prevention initiative is well underway. Failure to achieve an immediate or intermediate outcome might be the first clue. Whenever outcomes are not being achieved as expected, you should ask yourself why.

Use your action plan for other clues to why expectations are not being met. Is the data from your needs and resources assessment consistent with the evidence-based program you are implementing? Is the cultural context appropriate? Is the defined population sufficiently similar? Are the suggested activities relevant to your defined population? Perhaps your defined population simply is not ready for the planned program and a remedial or interim program should be implemented first.

Given the complexities associated with determining whether adaptations are needed during implementation, or whether the program or its specific components were simply not implemented properly, you may want to seek assistance from a skilled evaluator. With the evaluator's help and/or your evaluation team, review the following steps prior to making a decision to adapt:

- Revisit the theory base behind the program to be sure that it is consistent with the findings from your needs and resources assessment.
- Analyze the *core components* of the evidence-based program in conjunction with your action plan for each component to determine which component(s) does not appear to be working.
- Check your needs assessment to single out those characteristics of your defined population that are truly unique and assess whether adaptation is needed to address those unique characteristics.
- Assess *fidelity* to ensure the core components were implemented as planned.

- Consult as needed with the program developer. Review the above steps and how they have shaped the plan for implementing the program in a particular setting. This may also include actual technical assistance from the developer, or referral to peers who have implemented the program in somewhat similar settings.
- Obtain feedback from the organization and/or community in which the implementation has taken place to help explain the outcomes you are getting.

Your analysis may take you back several steps to uncover the reasons for unsatisfactory results. That is why documentation is so important throughout this process of PATHWAYS. Thorough documentation of the steps you have taken will enable you to identify steps that will work and correct steps that do not work.

Make sure that you document even your failures and how you corrected them on your action plan. Adjust your component logic model if necessary. Neither the logic model nor the action plan is a report card. They are important tools that will help you plan and solve problems. You should not only record, but also report, what you accomplish. Encourage implementers to document what does not work as well as what does. This is valuable information that can contribute greatly to the field, as well as to your own overall success.

In Summary

Using logic models and action plans may seem tedious at first, but once accustomed to the process, you will see how they are indispensable. They will help keep your implementation on course toward positive outcomes. They will help you determine when adaptation is needed to meet your population's specific needs. They will facilitate the evaluation process and the reports needed to document your outcomes. If you are a coalition, or accountable for the outcomes of multiple providers, encourage each provider to follow this process. At the end, you can bundle each member's results to document the successful results achieved by the coalition.

The power of logic models and action plans lies in the process they generate. They provide a focus for practitioners and communities working collaboratively to find the best ways for achieving their goals and objectives.

These planning tools will also prove invaluable for building consensus. By facilitating analysis of why objectives have or have not been met, these tools help identify possible mid-course corrections and provide support when factors outside your control surface. When used to their best advantage, logic models and action plans serve as key building blocks for linking the community, program, budget, operations, and evaluation in a results-oriented process.

Reviewing the action steps for this chapter (page 105) will reinforce the importance of using these tools and documenting your implementation thoroughly. You will be glad for that documentation as you complete the process.

Resources and References

SAMHSA-related Web sites:

Centers for the Application of Prevention Technologies: www.captUS.org

SAMHSA model programs: www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. (2002 Conference Edition). *Finding the balance: Program fidelity and adaptation in substance abuse prevention* [Online]. Available: www.preventiondss.org

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. (1997). Guidelines and benchmarks for prevention programming (DHHS Publication No. 95-3033). Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Community Toolbox is a Web site (http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/) created and maintained by the University of Kansas Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development in Lawrence, KS, and AHEC/Community Partners in Amherst, MA. Selected units:

- Developing successful strategies: Planning to win, chapter 8, section 4
- Developing an action plan, part D, chapter 8, section 5
- Developing a plan for staff hiring and training, part D, chapter 10, section 1
- Hiring and training key staff of community organizations, part D, chapter 10, section 1

Northeast CAPT, presentation and training materials: www.northeastcapt.org/

Senge, Peter. (1994). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization.* New York: Doubleday.